

Maple Broadband
Addison County Communications Union District

Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2023 5:00 p.m. – 6:30p.m.

VIA TEAMS and live at ACRPC

1. Call to Order:

Steve Huffaker, Chair of Maple Broadband, opened the meeting at 5:03 p.m. and welcomed the representatives of the member towns and members of the public to Maple Broadband's November meeting. Steve opened the meeting with a Public Hearing on Maple Broadband's Annual Report and proposed Budget. Steve opened the floor to questions. Hearing none, Ellie presented the proposed budget to the Full Board. She noted that she expects the financing line item of the budget is high and will need to be revised as the year progresses, but for the purposes of budgeting at this time, it represents her worst case option. Steve and Ellie responded to a number of questions regarding the budget from members of the Full Board. At the conclusion of questions from Board members, no members of the public asked questions, Steve closed the hearing at 5:35.

Steve opened the business portion of the meeting at 5:36. The following people were present:

Mike Sheets, Alternate Bridport;
Dan Sonneborn, Delegate Bristol;
Steve Huffaker, Delegate Ferrisburgh;
Ross Conrad, Delegate Middlebury;
Hugh McLaughlin, Alternate Middlebury;
Mark Boltz-Robinson, Delegate Monkton;
Ellie de Villiers, Delegate New Haven;
Bill Goddard, Delegate Orwell;
Justin Boyer, Delegate Salisbury;
Carl Siebecker, Alternate Shoreham;
Nancy Cornell, Delegate Starksboro;
Rich Warren, Alternate Starksboro;
Shannon Haggett, Delegate Vergennes;
Andrew Martin, Delegate Waltham;
Spence Putnam, Delegate Weybridge;

Adam Lougee, Clerk, non-member representing Addison County Regional Planning
Commission

Cy Tall, Treasurer Cornwall

2. Agenda Approval. Steve asked for additions or changes to the agenda. **Nancy Cornell moved to approve the agenda. Carl Siebecker seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands.**
3. Approve Meeting Minutes from October 10, 2023. **Ross Conrad moved to approve the October meeting minutes. Nancy Cornell seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The Board approved the minutes by a voice vote/show of hands.**
4. Public Comments: None.
5. Chair Report: Steve Huffaker noted the Executive Committee is made up of five members of the Board. The Executive Board keeps Maple Broadband moving forward on mission in between regular board meetings. Steve noted that Dan Sonneborn, a member from Bristol and one of the current members of the Executive Board, needs to step aside for personal reasons. Steve thanked Dan for his service to Maple Broadband. He also noted that Dan would continue to serve on the Full Board and would also help with IT and marketing.

Steve then noted that the Full Board needed to fill the open seat on the Executive Board from its ranks. Steve noted that the Board had identified at least one possible member, that Steve had spoken to him and that Jeff Glassberg, an alternate from Waltham, was willing to serve on the Executive Board. Steve opened the floor to other nominations. Hearing none, **Steve moved that the full Board appoint Jeff Glassberg of Waltham to the Executive Board to fill the open position for the remainder of the term. Carl Siebecker seconded the motion, which passed by a voice vote/show of hands, with Justin Boyer abstaining.**

6. VCBB/VCUDA Update. Ellie focused this discussion on the BEAD applications that will come due shortly. She noted both VCBB and VCUDA were focusing their efforts on preparing for this BEAD funding round. Overall, \$229 million dollars is allocated to Vermont for broadband through BEAD. VCBB should present a proposed final version of the BEAD rules for Vermont tomorrow. Maple Broadband and VCUDA both commented on the draft rules and Ellie believes the VCBB has done a good job crafting the BEAD rules. One of the most important changes in recent weeks is that the NTIA issued a programmatic waiver to the Letter of Credit requirement, which provides more flexibility in terms of how states are able to meet this NTIA requirement. VCUDA also continues to explore options for the State of Vermont to help CUDs finance the BEAD requirements. VCBB will be presenting a training on debt financing tomorrow. BEAD funding is still months away, but Maple Broadband is working hard to be prepared to apply for the funding. Additionally, Maple Broadband's budget shows that it does not expect BEAD funding until 2025.
7. Financial update: Having already presented the budget at the public hearing, Ellie presented the financial statement that had been distributed to the Board ahead of the meeting.

8. Operations Report: Ellie noted that we were over 100 subscribers connected and had 44 more in the queue in the coming weeks. Maple Broadband intends to activate service in Shoreham and Orwell within a couple of weeks. Phase 1 service is planned to be completely operational before the end of the year, excluding areas that are pending third parties such as GMP undergrounding work and a GoNetspeed pole license over the Lemon Fair River in Cornwall. We are now working on the Phase 2 build in the Ferrisburgh/Waltham/Vergennes area.
9. Marketing Report. Ellie delivered the marketing report. She noted Maple Broadband continues to focus on signing new subscribers in the Phase 1 buildout area. Maple Broadband sent direct mail to all served addresses. It has also created and hung posters in Phase 1 towns.
10. Affordability. The future of the federal ACP program is unclear at this stage, so Maple Broadband has paused its active marketing of the program pending further clarity. ACP in combination with Malple's top-up subsidy can bring the monthly cost of a Maple Broadband subscription down to \$19.95/month.
11. Other business. None.
12. Delegate reappointments and appointments reminder – Leicester and Whiting. Steve asked that members continue to seek out potential delegates from Whiting and Leicester. Our Phase 3 build impacts both Leicester and Whiting and we would like to have active delegates representing them participating in our activities during the build.
13. Next Meeting: December 12, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
14. Adjourn. **Spence Putnam moved to adjourn the meeting, Shannon Haggett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands at 6:25 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee, Clerk